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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/291,358	04/14/1999	KENJI MASAKI	325772200960	2014
25227	7590	01/12/2006	EXAMINER	
MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP 1650 TYSONS BOULEVARD SUITE 300 MCLEAN, VA 22102			BHATNAGAR, ANAND P	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2623	

DATE MAILED: 01/12/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/291,358	MASAKI, KENJI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Anand Bhatnagar	2623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 October 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,7-9 and 14-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 7-9, and 15-17 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 18 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11/23/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's amendment filed on 10/20/05 has been entered and made of record.
2. Applicant has amended claims 18 and 20. Claims 3-6, 10-13, and 21 have been previously canceled. Currently claims 1, 2, 7-9, and 14-20 are pending. Examiner refers to the rejection below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 18 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eschbach (U.S. patent 6,014,469) and Katsuma (EP 0 357 385 A2).

Regarding claims 18 and 20: An image processing method which is correction processed for two or more items about a quality of color image data, comprising:

judging a necessity/nonnecessity of correction of image data of a color image individually with respect to two or more of the items regarding the quality of the image data (Eschbach; fig. 7 elements S920-S980, col. 6 lines 45-67, and

col. 7 lines 3-35, wherein the contrast and exposure, i.e. read as image data of a color image, are judged to see if image correction is needed); and

performing a correction transaction corresponding to the item about the item judged as a correction being required during judging, unless judged that there is a nonnecessity of correction (Eschbach; fig. 7 element S980, wherein the image is filtered, i.e. read as corrected/enhanced, based on the judgement of the contrast and exposure data of the image.).

Eschban discloses to improve an image by detecting two variables, contrast and exposure, of an image and determining using two thresholds if there is a need to correct the image. If the results determine if there is a need to correct the image then a noise filter is applied to improve the image. Eschban does not disclose to consider a third variable of a color image to judge to see if an image needs correction. Katsuma teaches to judge the maximum and minimum pixel color values of the image and, if need be based on the result, then generate and apply a color masking coefficient to correct the image (Katsuma; abstract and page 2 lines 35-50). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to combine the teaching of Katsuma to the disclosure of Eschbach because they are analogous in image correction. One in the art would have been motivated to incorporate the teaching of Katsuma to that of Eschbach in order to judge three variables in an image in order to have an image with visually favorable quality (Katsuma; page 2 lines 35-37). Further, it is a matter of configuration to analyze a specific number (two, three, four, five, etc.) of

variables (ex. colors, luminance, sharpness, contrast, brightness, noise in the image, etc.) in an image to correct the image.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1, 2, 7-9, and 14-17 allowed.
5. Claim 19 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will

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the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Contact Information

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anand Bhatnagar whose telephone number is (571) 272-7416, whose supervisor is Jingge Wu whose number is (571) 272-7429, Central fax is 571-273-8300, and Tech center 2600 customer service office number is 703-306-0377.

AB

Anand Bhatnagar

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January 8, 2006

